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Vacillations Hamper U.S. Policy in Far East

WASHINGTON — A clear-cut statement of the range of American interest in the Far East does not exist, since the definition that many Americans accept is rejected by as many others. It is therefore not surprising that American relations with the Orient follow an unstable course.

This problem is not new. For at least thirty years the United States has been unable to find a policy toward the Far East which it could consistently uphold. In 1922 this country accepted the Nine-Power Treaty, whose signatories agreed to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China. When Japan in 1937 violated the treaty by invading China proper, the United States refrained from acting. During World War II Secretary of State Cordell Hull ranged the United States against the continuation of colonialism. Since last January the United States has been assisting France to maintain its colonial rule over Indo-China, although Secretary of State Dean Acheson on March 15 told the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco that one of the "dominant ideas" inspiring the "deep and revolutionary movement of the peoples of Asia" is "revulsion against foreign domination." Again and again actions have belied assertions because Americans disagree so thoroughly about what Asia means to them that Presidents and Secretaries of State sense the absence of the strong popular support which could give them the confidence to implement their words.

American Policy in Formosa

The tendency to waver has seldom been so clear as in relation to Formosa, the last stronghold of the Chinese Nationalist government.

On August 5, 1949 the State Department, in releasing the China White Paper, said that the Nationalist government "has been unable to rally its people and has been driven out of extensive and important portions of the country, despite very extensive assistance from the United States and advice from eminent American representatives which subsequent events proved to be sound." Moreover, Secretary Acheson wrote to President Truman then that the leaders of the Nationalist government "proved incapable of meeting the crisis confronting them [the civil war], its troops . . . lost the will to fight, and [the] government . . . lost popular support." Last January 5 President Truman stated that the United States would not provide military aid or advice to the Chinese forces on Formosa. Secretary Acheson, explaining the decision, said: "The underlying factors in the decision . . . have to do with the fundamental integrity of the United States and with maintaining in the world the belief that when the United States takes a position it sticks to that position and does not change it by reason of transitory expediency or advantage on its part."

Now the United States has reversed this policy in regard to Formosa, although the island remains the stronghold of the Chinese Nationalist government which is led today by the same leaders criticized in the White Paper. The change began on June 27, when President Truman, in ordering American troops to Korea, dispatched elements of the Seventh Fleet to guard the approaches to Formosa from the China mainland, which the Communists have wholly controlled since late 1949. The State Department signified informally that it expected the withdrawal of the vessels and the return of American Formosa policy to its former status upon cessation of hostilities in Korea. On August 1, however, General Douglas MacArthur, supreme commander for the Allied powers in Japan and commander of the United Nations forces in Korea, visited Formosa and reached agreements which carry forward the decision of June 27.

In expectation of a Communist cross-water invasion, and contrary to the President's assertion of January 5, the United States immediately after General MacArthur's visit began to supply the Chinese Nationalists on Formosa with military aid and advice. Major General A. P. Fox, deputy chief of staff to General MacArthur in Japan, with a group of twenty-two officers and men, on August 4 established in Taipei, capital of Formosa, a permanent liaison office with the MacArthur headquarters in Tokyo. Brigadier General George I. Back reached Formosa with a group of Americans who have begun to operate the Chinese military communications system. General MacArthur sent six jet planes to the Chinese Nationalist air force.

The altered policy toward Formosa associates the United States with the fate of the Chinese Nationalists, from whom the Truman Administration has been trying to dissociate the United States since General George C. Marshall early in 1947 returned from his unsuccessful mission to China.

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The reversal underlines the influence of Republicans on the Democratic Administration. Three Republican Senators—H. Alexander Smith of New Jersey, Robert A. Taft of Ohio and William Knowland of California—last winter recommended that the United States help the Nationalist army in its island retreat and postpone settlement of the political status of Formosa, which has been administered as a province of China since 1946 without objection by the United States. Visitors to General MacArthur have reported that he set forth in private the same opinion that the Republican Senators set forth in public. The January policy toward Formosa and the August policy stand for different conceptions of the nature of American interest in Asia. The January policy had the long-term purpose of strengthening America by winning for us the confidence of Asian peoples in our willingness to let Asia go its own way. The August policy has the short-range purpose of providing the United States with a strategic position possibly useful in halting the advance of Communist forces allied with the Soviet Union.

Formosa a Source of Problems

To enable government officials in Washington to grasp the full implications of the change, President Truman has sent his special foreign policy adviser, W. Averell Harriman, to Japan for conferences with General MacArthur. The mission is necessary because the abrupt change in policy toward the Chinese Nationalists unbalances United States foreign policy in general. The Truman Administration has consistently assumed until now that the conflict with the Soviet Union centered in Europe, not Asia, and the United States has developed its armed forces and its system of alliances with that assumption in mind. By intervening in Formosa, however, America risks the possibility of having to engage most of its military strength in a Chinese war and depleting forces theoretically available to Europe. Such a conflict could become a general war if the Soviet Union invoked its February treaty of mutual military assistance with Communist China. The Soviet Union, however, might derive greater advantage in holding aloof from such a conflict while the United States devoted its energies to the lesser foe. Our new policy in Formosa lacks the international sanction which backs us in Korea; in helping the Chinese Nationalists, we are not carrying out a resolution of the United Nations.

Like all previous American policies in Asia, the August policy is subject to change without notice. Chinese in Formosa, however, expect it to last. "American aid to China, both military and economic, will increase as the actual situation demands," T. V. Wellington Koo, Chinese Ambassador to the United States, said in Taipei on August 3.

BLAIR BOLLES

Unflagging Use of UN Needed to Win Asian Minds

The bitter debate that opened in the United Nations Security Council on August 1 with the return of Russia's delegate Jacob A. Malik, Council president for the month, brought out in sharp form the main issues at stake in Asia, of which Korea is at the moment the most exacerbated example. Mr. Malik's charges that the United States is the aggressor in Korea and that but for American intervention the conflict in that country would have proved merely a civil war were, in the opinion of most observers at Lake Success, aptly described by British representative Sir Gladwyn Jebb as "upside down" arguments creating an "Alice in Wonderland" atmosphere. Many of those present at the debates, however, felt that the attempt of the United States to shunt aside the question of Communist China's representation in the Council and the reference of Dr. T. F. Tsiang, Chinese Nationalist representative, to the Peiping regime as a "puppet" at the very time when General Douglas MacArthur was making agreements with Chiang Kai-shek on Formosa also were out of touch with reality.

Attitude of Asia

The Council debate, which again and again seemed to get lost in procedural thickets, could be dismissed merely as another attempt by Russia to make the United Nations a sounding-board for its propaganda. But since the propaganda, on this occasion, is directed primarily at Asia, its possible impact on Asian peoples becomes an issue of paramount importance in a struggle which is waged with ideas even more than with armaments. In Asia the United States is vulnerable not because of its own past misdeeds—American policy in the Philippines has won high regard for this country—but because of the distasteful memories left there by Western colonial powers, with which this country has now become closely associated not only in Europe but also in the Far East. Hostility to Russia and communism has obscured the realization here that twentieth century unrest in Asia was due, first of all, to dissatisfaction with Western rulers and had been fanned to fever heat by Japan's anti-Western slogan of World War II, "Asia for the Asiatics." We can arouse the West to oppose Russian and Communist encroachments in the Orient, but it is far more difficult to stir to action peoples only recently governed or (as in Indo-China) still governed by colonial powers. The only way we can do it successfully is to demonstrate by our actions, day in and day out, that the objectives of the United States in Asia are fundamentally different from those previously pursued by Britain, France and the Netherlands.

This happens to be particularly important in the case of Korea, which since the end of the nineteenth century has been a victim of great power rivalries. When Korea, long linked to China, was opened up to the rest of the world after China's defeat by Japan in 1896, there followed, as the late George McCune reminds us in a timely book *Korea Today*,* "a scramble for economic concessions from the country, resembling, on a smaller scale, the rivalry of foreign powers for similar advantages in China." The United States and Russia joined in this scramble, along with Britain, France, Germany and Japan, and for a time American capital played an important role in Korea. Soon, however, the rivalry narrowed down to a struggle between Japan and Russia (Tsarist Russia had "obtained significant trading rights but lacked the capital to secure her ends"). Following Japan's victory over Russia in 1904-05, the Japanese achieved a monopoly of Korea's resources and transformed the country into a colony. In appraising the Kremlin's policy on Korea it is well to bear in mind that the United States, at that time, readily acquiesced in Japan's absorption of Korea.

The UN and Imperialism

Overshadowing all other aspects of the

*George M. McCune, with the collaboration of Arthur L. Grey, Jr., *Korea Today*. (Issued under the auspices of the International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1950, $5.00)

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Korean war is the long-range question of how small nations like Korea can be assured of genuine independence as long as two or more great powers remain actual or potential rivals for strategic positions, or resources, or influence over men's minds. The old-fashioned imperialism of the Western colonial powers, defied by the American colonists long before it became one of the principal targets of Marx and Lenin, has now practically come to an end in Asia—unless the United States props it up where it still exists, as in Indo-China. When the Communists denounce this form of imperialism they are flogging a dead horse. India's Prime Minister Nehru, while pointing out last week that the West does not understand the point of view of Asia's peoples on the affairs of that continent, dismissed the charge of "dollar imperialism" made by some Indian critics against the United States, and criticized the lack of liberty in the U.S.S.R. So far as Asia is concerned, the principal mistake the Soviet government has made since the war has been to ape the nineteenth-century policies of Western colonial powers. Instead of fostering the brotherhood of downtrodden peoples, as urged by Lenin, the U.S.S.R. has attempted to play the part of a domineering great power toward its smaller or weaker neighbors—although so far it has done so in Eastern Europe rather than in the Far East.

This policy has done more to turn actual or potential Communist sympathy in Asia away from Russia than any other action of the Kremlin. The issue has already been clarified by Yugoslav spokesmen who contend that the Soviet government, by acting like a "capitalist" and not a "socialist" state, betrayed the Communist revolution and jeopardized its ultimate fulfilment. Yugoslavia's principal Communist theorist, Milovan Djilas, quotes Lenin to show that he believed in voluntary action alone to achieve the economic unity of "socialist" countries by means of "economically non-profit-bearing and politically non-dominant assistance." This is the kind of aid that Tito feels Russia refused to give and the only kind of aid he asserts he can accept from the West. It is also the form of aid that the United States, under Point Four, has declared it is able and willing to offer to underdeveloped countries. The test now is whether a great power can give assistance on terms of self-abnegation for the common good.

What can be done to remove suspicions of Western imperialism without making it possible for Russia to step into the vacuum that may result, at least temporarily? The answer is to make full and continuous use of the United Nations—not merely for purposes of collective security, as in Korea, but in all fields of international endeavor. The United Nations Economic and Social Council, meeting in Geneva during July, revealed a strong conviction on the part of many delegates that the only workable approach to the problems of areas recently held or still governed by colonial powers is not through direct American action but through measures sponsored by the UN. James Reston of the *New York Times*, writing from Lake Success, has pointed out that propaganda addressed to the Asian peoples would carry far more weight if it came from the United Nations than if it emanated from the United States.

Washington took a historic step forward by placing military operations in Korea, of which we have so far borne the brunt, under the aegis of the UN. But this was a first step. We cannot expect to enjoy the full confidence of our UN partners if we work through the international organization on selected issues only, reserving others for our own unilateral decision. Many nations have already been disturbed to find that, while we expect their loyal support in Korea, we are still playing a lone hand in Indo-China, Formosa and Spain. Like marriage, genuine cooperation with the UN must be for better or worse.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

Asian Crisis Tests British Commonwealth Unity

Member nations of the British Commonwealth were among the first to send forces to Korea to participate in the United Nations action in support of United States troops. British naval units and Australian fighter planes are in action, and three Canadian destroyers and a squadron of long-range transport planes are en route. In response to Secretary-General Trygve Lie's appeal for more military aid, Britain, Australia and New Zealand announced on July 26 that they would also supply ground troops. South Africa on August 3 promised an air force fighter squadron. Canada announced on August 7 that it would recruit a special brigade of infantry for UN use. This force of 5,000 men, however, was not to be taken from Canada's existing forces, and it was understood that at least six months would be necessary to train the unit.

These contributions, in so far as they are already at the scene of the fighting, still leave the brunt of the bitter struggle for Korea to the American G.I. Those promised for the future may well arrive after the first decisive phases of the war are over. Nonetheless, it is to Britain and other members of the Commonwealth that the United States must look for substantial assistance in any general conflict with the Soviet Union or in any series of "little hot wars" which may characterize the world struggle.

How Strong Is Britain?

The United Kingdom itself remains a great power, despite economic difficulties and its loss of nineteenth-century world dominance. Whatever hopes Labor Britain might have had at the end of World War II of enjoying a tranquil peace—either through neutrality or by acting as a Socialist bridge between a capitalist United States and a Communist Russia—were dashed in 1946 by Soviet diplomacy. At that time the U.S.S.R., by questioning the presence of British troops in Indonesia and Greece in the infant UN, seemed intent on splitting the close wartime liaison between London and Washington, concentrating its attacks on the weakened British empire. The net effect was to throw the British back on the United States, forcing them to maintain a more costly defense force than they might otherwise have found compatible with their economic position. As a result, defense expenditures have been running at 20 per cent of the government budget and 7.5 per cent of the country's national income.

When the Korean conflict started Britain had approximately 718,000 men in uniform including 372,000 in the army, 202,000 in the Royal Air Force and 140,000 in the navy. While the navy and RAF were in a relatively advanced state of preparedness, army units were stretched thinly to meet Britain's post-war international commitments. Seven-eighths of the ground forces was on overseas service, mainly in Germany, Malaya and Hong Kong and the Middle East. The Hong Kong garrison, reinforced last winter to meet possible threats from Communist China, con-

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sisted of one full division, plus supporting units and 10,000 police and security guards. In Malaya another sizeable force was engaged in attempting to suppress Communist guerrillas who have been persistent and bothersome but have failed to interfere seriously with the colony's rich rubber and tin economy. Newspaper estimates put Britain's Far Eastern forces in these two areas at 40,000 men. London appears reluctant to divert any sizeable part of these units to Korea, and it is thought that no more than 5,000 to 6,000 British troops are to be sent to join the United Nations effort.

Meanwhile, the British government announced on July 26 that it would add £100 million to its £780 million defense budget this year. On August 3 in response to a request from Washington it submitted a memorandum outlining a 45 per cent increase in arms expenditures conditional on United States financial assistance. This plan called for the spending of £3.4 billion ($9.5 billion) in the next three years, or £1.1 billion annually, an estimated 10 per cent of the national income. Although the increase was modest in comparison with the $15 billion and more planned by the United States, it would bring Britain's defense effort in relation to its resources into line with ours. In view of their economic problems, the British contend that their program will actually call for greater sacrifices.

Dominion Efforts

Of the dominion governments Australia and New Zealand have been most vigorous in response to UN calls for armed aid. It should be remembered, however, that these are small countries, Australia having a population of 7.5 million and New Zealand 1.8 million. Moreover, they are almost as distant from Korea as San Francisco and cannot be expected to send more than several thousand men in the next few months. Robert Gordon Menzies, the Australian Prime Minister on a visit to the United States, told Congress on August 1 that he would like to see a British Commonwealth division—including United Kingdom, Australian, New Zealand and possibly Canadian troops—in action in Korea. A division would involve not much more than 18,000 men; the United States has already landed elements of five divisions on the peninsula.

Canada has been slower to answer the call for ground forces, probably because Canadian interest turns toward Europe rather than the Far East, but also because there are vestiges of pre-war isolationism, notably in French Canadian Quebec, that affect domestic politics. Domestic cleavages will probably prevent South Africa from making more than a token contribution.

The three new Asian nations of the Commonwealth — India, Pakistan and Ceylon—offer little promise of military assistance in the present conflict. However, their continued presence in the loose and informal association that has evolved from the British empire provides a unique opportunity for the West to win the Asian mind. This opportunity is also a test, and failure on the part of both Britain and the United States might bring about their departure from the Commonwealth.

Here India's desire to bring Communist China into the UN, reiterated forcefully by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru before the Indian Parliament on August 3, has already created difficulties for the West. Britain, which recognized the Peiping government last winter at approximately the same time that India did, has ordered its fleet in Far Eastern waters to stay neutral if Chinese Communists attack Formosa. While Britain favors Western aid to the Bao Dai regime in Indo-China, India regards it as an example of what Nehru called "new types of colonialism and controlism." Thus any intensification and extension of the struggle in the Far East will inevitably bring about new strains within the Commonwealth and new stresses in its relationship with the United States.

WILLIAM W. WADE

Outer Mongolia and Its International Position, by Gerard M. Friters. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1949. $5.00.

This volume fills an important gap in current English materials on Asia. Relying heavily on Russian, as well as on Chinese and Western, language sources, the author presents a detailed analysis of pressures and interaction between Mongolia and Russia, China and Japan against the setting of Mongol society. Owen Lattimore provides a perceptive introduction, and the book includes a useful bibliography, appendix and chronology.

News in the Making

WILL EUROPE UNITE? When the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe gathered at Strasbourg on August 7, a West German delegation was present—the first time the Germans had appeared in an international political gathering since the Nazis walked out of the League of Nations in 1933. While there is a strong feeling that the Korean war should spur European cooperation, nationalist sentiments remain a serious obstacle to union at the political, economic and even military levels.

GAINS IN SOVIET INDUSTRY: According to recent figures released by the Central Statistical Administration of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union the final goals of the Fourth Five-Year Plan have been exceeded. The overfulfillment of the quotas in the heavy industries, it is reported, more than compensated for the inability of the Russian economy to attain planned output in several categories of major consumer goods. American observers suggest that the tremendous rise in the index of industrial output reflects an inflationary bias, as well as increasing concern with military production.

MOBILIZATION BILL DEBATED: A dispute in Congress regarding an acceptable formula for application of price and wage controls accounts for the delay in passing an economic mobilization bill. On August 1 the President, in response to the widespread support for Bernard Baruch's testimony of July 26, indicated willingness to accept economic legislation including these controls. Mr. Truman insisted, however, that these powers were not now vital and that stand-by authority would suffice.

BAUDOUIN FOR BRUSSELS: A formula for resolving Belgium's royal crisis was found on August 1 after a week of disorders brought about by Socialist opposition to King Leopold's return. Leopold reluctantly agreed to transfer his powers immediately to his 19-year-old son, Prince Baudouin, and has undertaken to abdicate formally on Baudouin's twenty-first birthday in 1951. Bitterness persists between the pro-Leopold Social Christians and the Socialists despite the settlement.

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